

Appln No. 10/777,370
Amdt date April 20, 2006
Reply to Office action of December 21, 2005

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for implant removal comprising an anchoring element (11) ~~which can be connected~~ attachable to the an implant and ~~comprising~~ a coupling member (13) ~~which is fastened to the anchoring element(11) and has, the coupling member comprising a handling section and having a length such that [[a]] the handling section (15) of the coupling member (13) can be placed at a position~~ is locatable in a patient's body ~~disposed remotely from the anchoring element (11) connected to allow retrieval of the implant from the patient's body.~~

2. (Currently Amended) An apparatus in accordance with claim 1, wherein the anchoring element [[[11)]] can be screwed to the implant.

3. (Currently Amended) An apparatus in accordance with claim 1, wherein the anchoring element [[[11)]] is a terminal element for the protection of a fastening section, in particular of a thread section, of the implant usable for the insertion of the implant.

4. (Currently Amended) An apparatus in accordance with claim 1, wherein the anchoring element [[[11)]] is a plug screw and has an externally threaded section [[[17)]] which can be screwed to an internally threaded section formed at the implant.

5. (Currently Amended) An apparatus in accordance with claim 1, wherein the coupling member [[[13)]] has an elongate shape.

6. (Currently Amended) An apparatus in accordance with claim 1, wherein the coupling member [[[13)]] is flexible.

Appln No. 10/777,370

Amdt date April 20, 2006

Reply to Office action of December 21, 2005

7. (Currently Amended) An apparatus in accordance with claim 1, wherein the coupling member [(13)] is a cable.

8. (Currently Amended) An apparatus in accordance with claim 1, wherein the coupling member [(13)] is made up of a plurality of individual load carriers.

9. (Currently Amended) An apparatus in accordance with claim 1, wherein the coupling member [(13)] is a wire.

10. (Currently Amended) An apparatus in accordance with claim 1, wherein the coupling member [(13)] is manufactured from a biocompatible material.

11. (Currently Amended) An apparatus in accordance with claim 1, wherein the coupling member [(13)] is made of a suture material.

12. (Currently Amended) An apparatus in accordance with claim 1, wherein the coupling member [(13)] is manufactured from a material selected from the group consisting of titanium and steel.

13. (Currently Amended) An apparatus in accordance with claim 1, wherein the coupling member [(13)] is fastened at a first end to the anchoring element [(11)] and has the handling section [(15)] at a second end.

14. (Currently Amended) An apparatus in accordance with claim 13, wherein the handling section [(15)] is formed as a loop, a sling or an eye of the coupling member [(13)].

15. (Currently Amended) An apparatus in accordance with claim 1, wherein the length of the coupling member [(13)] is dimensioned such that the handling section [(15)] can be placed directly under skin of a patient.

16. (Original) An apparatus in accordance with claim 1, wherein it is made for the removal of medullary nails.

Appln No. 10/777,370

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17. (Original) An operation system having a plurality of implants, in particular of medullary nails, and having a plurality of implant removal apparatuses in accordance with claim 1 whose anchoring element can in each case be connected to at least one of the implants.

18. (New) A method for treating a patient with an implant, the implant including an anchoring element attachable to an implant and a coupling member fastened to the anchoring element, the coupling member having a length such that a handling section is locatable in a patient's body remotely from the anchoring element, the method comprising:

- locating the implant in a bone of the patient;
- connecting the anchoring element to the implant; and
- locating the handling section remotely from the anchoring element.

19. (New) The method of claim 18, further comprising incising the skin at an appropriate position to get access to the handling section and following the coupling member as a guide to retrieve the implant.

20. (New) The method of claim 18, further comprising incising the skin at an appropriate position to access the handling section and applying a force to the handling section to remove the implant from the bone of the patient.

21. (New) The apparatus in accordance with claim 1, wherein the coupling member allows removal of the implant.